



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

Dear Maryland Partners,

In some way, diabetes affects every Marylander. You may have diabetes or know someone who does. You may have lost a loved one to complications from the disease. You may be a parent seeking to adopt healthy food and activity habits. You may be an employer concerned about how diabetes affects productivity and health insurance costs. Or you may be a taxpayer considering how to reduce the diabetes burden to our State's vitality and economy. Regardless of where you live in our State, diabetes is part of our reality, but it is a disease we can prevent or mitigate.

Diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death in Maryland. According to the federal government, the number of US adults diagnosed with diabetes has more than doubled in the past 20 years. And in Maryland, over a third of all adults have prediabetes, the condition that often leads to diabetes.

There are many reasons for all Marylanders to get involved against this preventable disease. To that end, the Maryland Department of Health and others have created this draft of the State's inaugural 2019-2023 Diabetes Action Plan. The draft Plan provides information on the disease burden in Maryland, and best practices for the State and its partners to implement to prevent and manage diabetes. These actions are targeted to:

- People at a healthy weight, so they may prevent overweight and obesity;
- People who are overweight and obese, so they may achieve a healthy weight;
- People with prediabetes and gestational diabetes, so they may easily take part in prevention programs to halt disease progression; and
- People with diabetes, so they may control their disease, get the proper medical care they need to manage their disease and enjoy their optimum health.

The strategies in this draft Plan are far-reaching because no one alone can make all the changes that will be needed. Success in defeating diabetes requires broad and strong collaboration between communities, organizations, businesses, local governments and individuals across the State. We encourage you to review the draft and send us your feedback and comments. And, importantly, also let us know how you think your group or community can get involved. The final Plan will tie in public comment and will be widely circulated later this year. It will serve as the State's guide by which we will set specific measurable goals and measure our successes.

This is our shared call to action: to take steps today to build a Healthy Maryland for ourselves and for future generations. We look forward to your comments and to working with you to improve the health of all Marylanders.

Yours in good health,

Robert R. Neall
Secretary

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